

श्याम मुरारी
लक्ष्मीपुर रबीरी

SAPTATI

SEVENTY FIRST BIRTH-DAY CELEBRATION

on

6th MAY, 1969

of

His Holiness

Mahatma Ramchandraji Maharaj

Founder President

of

SRI RAMCHANDRA MISSION

SHAHAJAHANPUR

(U. P.)

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HEART-FELT HUMBLE TRIBUTE

BY:

G. VIJAYA RANGA CHARY,
M. Sc., LL. B., S. A. S., M. I. E. T.,
HYDERABAD.

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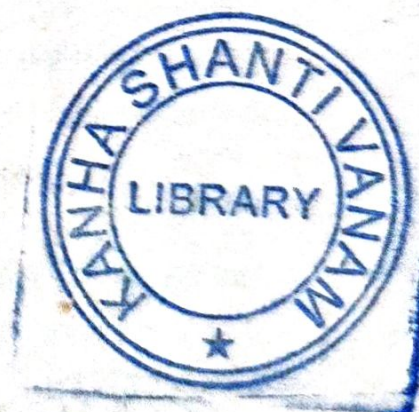
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SAPTATI OF THE SAGE OF SHAHJAHANPUR

Born at Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, on Sunday, the 30th of April, 1899, His Holiness Mahatma Ramchandraji, Founder-President of Sri Ramchandra Mission, completes Seventy years of an outstanding life in the Service of Spirituality. On this, the occasion of his Saptati, the ardent and natural prayer goes out from the hearts of all the abhyasis that Almighty God may bestow on this Unique Personality more and more years of life, so that the aspiring mankind every where may be enabled to receive his Boon of the ultimate in this, their present life only.

2. Gautama, the Buddha, is said to have addressed these words in the Royal Court of his father soon after his enlightenment: "Measure not with words the Immeasurable; nor sink the string of thought into the Fathomless". To my mind, these very wise word would fittingly apply to our Beloved Master, affectionately known as Babuji, for such a supreme stature happens to be his spiritual state.

3. Our master has written books from a highest plane of consciousness and his words therein, wiser than ever said before, are pre-eminently suited to the present day conditions of life. In his published works, so far, Sri Babuji has made significant contributions to Perennial Thought, bringing to life as it were, this fine thought said somewhere: "It is indeed wrong to think that all thought has long ago already set down in books, all imagination in poem, all emotion and feeling in art and that what one may hope to say, he only throws in as confirmatory of this supposed complete body of human endeavour. Rather all

Poetry has scarce chanted its first song. Art is yet to make its maiden attempt. Man is born with no memory of his past achievements and he has to learn afresh from the alphabet all over. The perpetual admonition of Nature is that the World is new, untried. Accept it and try to understand it anew. Here, I give you, the Universe, a Virgin today".

4. Such being the master's versatility it is not easy to encompass any account of his contributions to self-culture in the short space of an article. Some features only can be outlined. Even these should show an amazing "newness" in his approach to the postures of the perennial.

5. For instance, Sri Babuji would baffle the world of traditionalists when he says that God is simple and can be realised by equally simple means. The learned and the refined may indeed find the idea for too naive to be taken seriously. Yet we know that the eager student of higher life would hug this idea to his heart, with tears of gratitude to bewet his wonder, fond as the very inspiration he has long been in waiting and wanting for. Has not also the Scientist said: "Simplicity is the seal of Truth"? wherefore the cussedness, then, which the erudite find in a simplicity? Is it that they specialise in smelling a rat everywhere or wherever they find their position, untenable, inconvenient and unacceptable?

6. Nevertheless, the abhyasis of Sahaj Marga know only too well that what all has been asked from them are two effortless meditations a day, morning and evening, and a short prayer at bed time. And they also know what is being conferred on them in return is an ineffable condition beggaring for words; too super-fine indeed for expression

in any manner. It was to each of them and perhaps every day, a self-certifying spiritual experience. How then would they choose to be on the side of the mere learned who have had no such experience in their erudition? Master has said some time: "Be learned and be lost".

7. One has only to turn to Master's recent contribution to the Sahaj Marga Patrika under the caption: 'Constant Remembrance', which, by the way, is the complete panacea for all spiritual ills and an adequate answer to all obstacles, in deed a cure - All for all impediments to a rapid spiritual advancement. Therein he says that the spiritual states indicated by the statements: "I am Brahma" "All is Brahma", and "All from Brahma", are undergone by all his abhayasis during the course of their march, though they may not be consciously aware of it! What magnanimity! More than is contained in the concept of 'Saving' Power of a Saviour! This article also places the final reach of "settledness" at several cuts above the states of the Upanishadic Mahavakyas. An earlier article under the heading: "Travel Light", is, in my opinion, a charter of Abhaya, in deed, surpassing all the kinds of Abhaya mankind has been bestowed from times immemorial. Because, at the least, his abhaya is a promise of freedom from recurring births.

8. The Vedic scholar may cavail at these claims. He may feel outraged that the sanctity of the Mahavakyas has been invaded. May be to him, this, a sacrilege; though no invasion, of anything dear is being done by the master. His invasion, if any, is the invasion on the idiocies which are barring the way to a real spiritual advancement. We, of the Sahaj Marga are, on the other hand immensely beheartened at the master's amazing power of "deliverance" to the utmost point of human approach. Hairs standing on end

at the profound prospect he is holding for us and cheering at us to reach, we bow to his person, the very Divine in human garb, and say heartfelt obeisance in bedewed gratitude, happy that the days are no longer and gone when we had had to heave and sigh with stoddard:

"Life of man is an arrow's flight,
Out of darkness into light,
And out of light into darkness again:
Perhaps to pleasure; perhaps in pain".

9. It is our Babuji's marvel, again, that mankind is released from the tyranny of Tapasya or physical austerities undertaken for a spiritual end. The Martyr and the Stolt, the recluse and the puritan, the Tantrik and the Sannyasi would have men seek their release by a process of severe self denial; a punishment of the flesh for having returned them to good earth! They would have men long for the cave, the mountain and the forest in the sanctuaries of which only can they hope to find God! They would have men renounce their home, belongings, wife and children and betake to woods where God has truly to be searched!

10. In order to bring due attention to the immensity of our master's service to mankind, I may dwell on the great freedom he has bestowed on us by ridding us free from the shackles of custom, usage and tradition; from the hold of dogma, doctrine and concept; from fetishism, formalism and superstition; from the ritual, piety and sacrament; so on and so forth, which were and are still considered to confer Divine grace ex-opero operato.

11. Indeed, so fast is the hold of physical austerities on human mind that Lord Krishna had to utter a severe warning against such practices in Geeta (XVII-5 and 6) thus: "Those men who practice terrible austerity not

enjoined by scriptures, given to hypocrisy and egoism, impelled by the force of lust and attachment; senseless, torturing all the elements in the body and ME also, who dwells in the body within, know thou these to be demonical resolves". But, despite this pointed warning from a famous and great Avatar, mankind has stuck to the method of austerities. In Buddha's day, they seem to have reigned supreme. The Prince of compassion that Buddha was, his heart would not accept sense in these inhuman tortures of the flesh for the sake of saving the soul. His arguments with the hatha-yogins that if one bought Heaven with his blood in Hell's hard market, would not the toil begin again when the bargain is through, bore no fruit and poor Buddha had to wend his way to gain a saving Enlightenment which should end human sorrow. I need also have to mention here that Lord Buddha was the only Personality of Avataric Eminence who had suffered a hard penance for a way that must save mankind. He was the only Avatar who bore the woes of men as his own, though his Royal father had seen to it that all comfort and luxury was afforded to him and nothing was spared towards this end which human ingenuity would secure and money procure. I am tempted to describe in Arnold's telling words the story of how Gautama, the Buddha, Saviour of the world, beheld the woe-begones of his day.

12. So Lord Buddha had met during his first venture in search of Enlightenment, a number of holy men around Rajagriha, King Bimbisara's town. He spent many moons with them closely observing their mortifications which are thus described: Some standing with lifted arms day and night till drained of blood and withered by disease, their slowly wasting joints and stiffened limbs jutting from sapless shoulders like dead forks from forest trunks; others clenching their hands so long and with so fierce a fortitude

that claw-like nails grew through the festered palm; still others walked on sandals spiked; some with sharp flints gashed breast and brow and thigh and scarred these with fire; a few threaded their flesh with jungle thorns and spits; crouching foul some besmeared their bodies with mud and ashes; some in rags of dead men wrapped about their loins some inhabiting spots where death pyres smouldered with corpses for their company, and kites screaming around them over the funeral spoils; some who cried five hundred times a day the names of Shiva wound with darting snakes about their sun-tanned necks and hollow flanks; a greivous company, crowns blistered by the blazing heat, eyes bleared, sinews and muscles and shrivelled visages haggard and war as slain men's. There crouched one in the dust who noon by noon meted a thousand grains of millet out and ate it with famished patience, seed by seed, and so starved on; their one who bruised his pulse with bitter leaves lest palate should be pleased; and next, a miserable saint self-maimed, eyeless and tongue-less, sexless crippled, deaf; the body by the mind being thus stripped for glory of much suffering and the bliss which they shall win. When Buddha spoke to the Master of these ceremonies, so to say, a sage of the woe-begones of this piteous anguish, he answered:

"'tis written if a man shall mortify
His flesh, till pain be grown the life he lives
And death voluptuous rest, such woes shall purge
Sin's dross away, and the soul purified,
Soar from the furnace of its sorrow, winged
For glorious spheres and splendours past all thought".

13. And when Buddha looked askance at this sermon of the sage of woe-begones and pressed for a possible better scheme of salvation and for the glory of yonder spheres and splendours they meant seeking, pat came

the answer which sped Buddha away from their fold to seek unaided for that by which mankind may be benefited "We have chosen this for road and tread it, Rajaputra, till the close though all its stones were fire in trust of death. Speak, if thou knowest a way more excellent; if not peace go with thee!"

14. Onward Buddha passed exceedingly sorrowful but bent on redeeming his resolve made to his Royal Father to return ten times a prince with royal wisdom won, the prince who cast away his world to save the world. Then as he meditated and meditated for the saving way, his strength waned to the point of dying and he cried; "Would that I had such help as man must have, for I shall die whose life was all men's hope". It was Sujata who restored him to health by a loving nourishment, whereupon he made way to the near by Tree of wisdom, The Bodhi Tree, and received his enlightenment under it. The way he discovered-The Four Noble Truths and The Eightfold Path-is said in *Tevigga Suttaas*" The Truth does he proclaim both in its letter and in its spirit, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its conalimination".

15. In regard to the more refined but orthodox practices like repetition of the holy word times without end, Ceremonials, Sacrifices and so, the story should be similar if not as bemoaning as the physical tortures of the Mortifier and the Puritan who is to be found in all the religions of the world with but nominal variations of the technique, here and there.

16 And more than the Middle Path which Buddha gave to the world is the Sahaj Marga of Sri Babuji which does not seek to unsettle any conditions of the work-a-day life, prescribes a very simple sadhana, relieves one from all the man-made shackles, confers tranquility and promises a

state of Sahaja Samadhi which is higher than Buddha's Nirvana. So is our excellent way, simple and Sweet at the beginning, simple and sweet in the middle and simple and sweet towards the end.

17. Speaking of the virginity of our Babuji's approach, I may say that his way, Sahaj Marga or the Natural Path to Realization, has been acclaimed as a "New Darshana" by an eminent philosopher, Dr. K. C. Varadachari, an erstwhile professor of comparative Religions, Ethics and Philosophy, University of Madras, and a very distinguished Preceptor of our centre at Tirupati. And rightly so; for, the known Darshanas have not inducted that much of naturalness into them as Sahaj Marga does, nor do they discuss the Process of yogic transmission or pranahuti as a sure means to Realization.

18. The very starting thesis of our beloved master is a rare exercise in the science of Self-Culture. It is this: "The end of Religion is the beginning of spirituality. The end of spirituality is the beginning of reality, and the end of Reality is the Real Bliss. Beyond Bliss is the Destination" This statement is more than proof that Religion is Realization, which Rama Krishna Paramahansa had said. It is more than best of the concepts of the "Goal". Sat-Chit-Anandam or Satyam, Sivam and Sundaram. It is certainly illustrative of the fact that Religion, unfortunately though by and large, is not mere ceremonial piety. It is an inspiring call to mankind that Religion shines best as a spiritual adventure. Master's thesis is indeed a master-piece of Original Thought, and volumes could be written on its basis.

19. Too long indeed has man been wedded to artificiality, complexity, superfluity, escapism, fatalism lotus-

eating etc. As examples of complexity and intricacy may be cited the attempts of the erudite to clothe God in mighty and pompous terms and to paint the path to Him as slippery, hard, ruinous; even ominous, precipitous and cataclysmic, so that the majority of aspirants are scared away. Then the knowledge of the ultimate has been a matter of breath-taking phrases. The natural relationship, sweet and loving, between the Man and the Maker was made a virtual matter of intellectual fencing, a war of words where the scholar only seems to have a place.

20. To them whose culturing in life demands the seeking for truth, a higher life of joy, beauty and love, a broadening of consciousness by thought, training and experience, till they can live and move in a fuller consciousness excompassing all created things, our master, has given a working answer relieving them, as it were, from an uncomfortable place in the vermin pool of verbal diarrhoea! The laity too who have no part to play in a drama of erudition, have the natural chance for their thirst in Sahaj Marga. But, by far, the greatest beneficiary, in my opinion, is the ordinary house holder weighed down by the crass and crosses of a challenging life. Should he have to be simply content with laying the table for men of the Holy Order and supplying them some good things of life he can ill-afford in the present day dearness conditions? Is it all to him the piteous merit said to flow from the eating of the holy crumb? He has to attend to mouths which mourn for the barest meal and why should any others have the choicest of it? Sri Babuji and Sri Lalaji, his illustrious Guru, have very high words for the householder which he best quoted. Fortunate is the householder indeed who is enancipated so to say, from a tradition of mere athithi-sathkara without the means provided for it, thanks to the modern conditions of life. Says

Lalaji, the Grand Master: "Our home is the training ground of patience and endurance. To endure calmly the adversities of a house-hold life is for us the greatest penance which is the noblest of all other forms of penances. What we have, therefore, to do under the circumstances is not to give way to the feeling of anger or grief but to assume an unquestioning attitude thinking that we ourselves are in the wrong for which we have to forbear with a cool mind. Solitary life in a forest and aloofness from all worldly concerns may be, to some, the means of cultivating patience and forbearance, but to us, the taunts and rebukes of our friends and relations is the greatest penance and the surest means of success!!" Surest means of success! when was this said before of a house-holder who has more often been used as a door mat by all and sundry? Long live Sahaj Marga and our Babuji who has bestowed this natural path on a very much neglected sector of society!

21. By teaching that "The two phases of life, the worldly and the divine, must go side by side, in conjunction with each other and must be attended to without least neglect of either." "Sri Babuji has brought together in one purview, the 'Divine' and the 'domestic', 'deen' and 'duniya', the 'herein' and 'hereafter' 'Samsara' and 'Nirvana', the 'immediate' and the 'Ultimate', 'Time' and 'Eternity', 'Science' and 'Reality', 'gain' and 'glory', 'Daya' and 'Maya', 'Good' and 'God' and not the least, 'Work' and 'Worship'. By asking us to soar high on both the wings he would have us 'divinise' all our activity so that it is all one continuous act of Divine Remembrance. Indeed, so long as work flows divinely with life, it does not cling and mar our existence. When it flows with the divine, it makes and inspires, but when work clings to life it mars and impedes and shows not the life, but itself. No greater tribute really to the Geeta Word of Karma phala tyaga.

22. It is thus that the natural path given by the master brings in a naturalness between Man, God, Work, and Nature. One is not pitted against the other, nor Man against all. It is a normalcy, a balance, a harmony, and an integration. Man is not merely to bend nature to his use. He might tame its tyrannies but not pit himself against it and lose himself in the process. For, Nature is wonderfully helpful, surprisingly simple, and scrupulously eager to answer all questions addressed to it sincerely and silently, so much so, that when answers are given by it one scarcely comprehends how it happened, he did not sooner perceive what seems so plain a truth. Master says that Nature's very characteristic is moderation, gaining which latter, we are in conformity with nature and that moderation is the very essence of spirituality.

23. To say another aspect of newness, I may quote the Doctor from his book. "Sahaj Marga—A new Darshana" Says he there: "It is an original discovery of Sri Ramchandra that there are rings which bind the individual, and that: "The Central Region opens before one a new frontier of Being. The exploration and experience of this divine region is beyond all description. This is the reality of realities thrown open to human experience by Sri Ramachandra's Yoga",

24. We have often heard the Indian mind described by western critics as metaphysical, because it is ready to soar in the Infinite. But why is it also not noted that the Infinite is not a mere matter of philosophical speculation to us? Our Babuji would have it that God with us is not a distant God. According to his teachings God belongs to our homes as well as to our hearts. We are to feel His nearness to us in all the human relationships of love and affection. He would go further and forge indeed a direct relationship with Him. And this is magnificently reflected

In the simple and short prayer he has prescribed to us. Six times in each year, on the opening page of each issue of Sahaj Marga Patrika, the prayer is inscribed in order to indicate its importance and efficacy as a daily item of Sadhana. This prayer is said to have been revealed to Sri Babuji, and may, therefore be taken as the very words of God. It inducts a direct relationship between the Aspirant and his Ideal. The Lover and the beloved are brought face to face. We state to God of our slavery to our wishes and ask of Him direct for liberation, nay, we implore to Him to bring us up to the stage of the goal He is and believe that He is the only power to do it. Herein is resolved an age-old conflict as to the place of "means" and "ends" in any scheme of worthwhile human endeavour. And this at the highest point! With our Babuji it is not the issue as to which preceeds which or which determines which, the means are the ends. It is not also the equality of attention to means and ends as Swami Vivekananda has sought to arbitrate. It is nothing short of an equation of means and ends, an identity of both verily at the highest level. A gifted one can really work out a spiritual calculus on this basis and so help to bridge a gulf existing between Science and Reality.

25. A great charm about master's writings is the ringing optimism charged through them. No corner whatsoever, is yielded to pessimism of any kind or shade. The spiritual march is indeed placed in a state of combat-readiness! From Reality at Dawn again: "We must march on the path of realization like a brave soldier with full faith and confidence not minding the difficulties or reverses. Half the distance is crossed if a man enters the field with a firm mind. A very powerful will made at the very first step and maintained all through shall never fail to achieve complete success". Ours is no lotus-eating business and no

matter of a dope as said of some lines of self-culture. Our Babuji would want us each to be a spartan. "It is absurd to think", says he, "even for a moment that we are in any way too weak or deficient to acquire the highest state of perfection ever attained so far even by the greatest sages of the past". Braver words than these were not uttered before. Encouragement such as this was never given before.

26. The scoring point of our system is the Pranahuti or Yogic Transmission. This feature is indeed unsurpassed in the annals of Spiritual History right from the Avataric Age. At least the transmission had never been administered on so wide or as free a scale as our master is doing. He asserts that spiritual training for the attainment of higher stages is only possible by the process of Yogic transmission and by no other means. According to Dr. Varadachari: "Pranahuti is the most significant instrument of realization—rather the only means. It is the Highest of Divine graces". in Babuji's words: "power of transmission is a Yogic attainment of a very high order by which a Yogi can infuse by his own will force the Yogic energy, or Godly Effulgence within any one and remove anything unwanted in him or detrimental to his spiritual progress. He can exercise this power not only on those assembled around him but on those too who are away from him. The power can be utilised in any way at any time. One who has got command over this power can, at a glance, create, temporarily or permanently, a condition of mind which is far ahead of the existing condition of the mind of an abhyasi and which otherwise will require a life-time to be achieved. It is not a vain assertion but a bare fact which may at any time be practically verified by any one who pleases to do so. Sages have often through power of transmission changed the entire nature of a man at a mere glance".

27. Speaking, again, in an article to the Sahaj Marga Partrika, master says of this transforming power: "The Worthy trainer with the power of Yogic transmission weakens the lower tendencies of the mind of the trainee and sows the seed of divine light in the innermost core of his heart. In this process the trainer uses his own will-force which has the Divine Infinite Power at its back. In a way he is conscious of That and he just focusses It through the lens of his own will upon the heart of the trainee. The trainee may not feel anything at the beginning. The reason is that he is accustomed to feel only through the senses, and the Divine Power is beyond senses. After some time however he may feel the results of such transmission which also are in the form of subtle changes of the workings of his vital parts and of the tendencies of his mind". So profound, yet simple, is the system of training under the aegis of our Divine Master who, for all this Boon, is nathless easily accessible - a Saulabhya, indeed.

28. And this training through Yogic transmission is not limited to the person of Sri Babuji alone. It is not as though one has always to go all the way to Shahjahanpur to have the benefit of it. Master himself makes an annual tour of the training centres and attends to the needs of each individual abhyasi. The occasion is also marked by a spontaneous upsurge of inspiration which attracts others to the Mission. Such new-commers are welcomed by immediate initiation into the system. Apart from all this, he has evolved a master-piece of spiritual Ministry which provides for an all-wide and year-round training where Preceptors and Prefects working under his direction and authority, give the gift of Pranahuti to any one who offers himself for spiritual upliftment and Divine Evolution.

29. The effect of transmission is not merely in the reformation of a part or the outer, but also in a transformation of the total, as well as a reach up to the Ultimate Goal. As the learned Doctor has said: "The result of the transmission is, as it were, the beginning of the experience of the ultimate Reality, and this experience, at our human level, is experienced as vibration or movement". Now, in a world beset with tensions of all kinds - economic, political, social, religious, sectarian, national, inter-national, provincial, personal, official, filial and so on, the transmission does excellent work as a sure de-tensioniser. The practicant feels an ineffable peace and gains the inner strength for a quiet efficiency in all the departments of life. The calmness and silence gained within enables him to face up to the Challenges of life with a cheer born of a true understanding of men and matters, things and thoughts. The rough and tumble of life, the cares and crosses of a work-a-day existence do not disturb the practicant over-much. In short, he attains to a real "Purpose of Life" and pursues his vocations and logical interests with a calm and consummate skill, like said in Sreemad Bhagawad Geeta: "Yogah Karmasu Kausalam" and "Samatvam Yogamuchyate".

30. An ingenuous bondage, almost the parting kick, a permanent legacy, as it were, left by the British to an ailing nation they had ruled over for well nigh two centuries, is the ravishing ritual renowned as the "Red Tape". Though it has taken an humble origin from the colour of the tape used to secure official files and documents it has made deep inroads into various departments of life, not excluding the spiritual! Every one, who is any one to do with official duty or favour, is threatened with yards and yards of it, until one begins to wonder where and how he happened to enter on the scene and how merciful to be shown a way out of it! Though the red tape must be an anachronism in

this Jet and space Age, as much indeed as a refrigerator in the North or South Pole, it still continues, to have a deadening hold in our country. As already said, the field of Self-culture too is not free from its alluring impact. Ask the erudite and the holy for a solution of your problem and you are confronted with a myriad quotations from scriptural sources and other authoritative texts that you would sooner repent for the folly. The remedy was worse than the disease! Shri Babuji hacks, mercilessly, at the root of this man-made evil and cuts the spiritual red tape to an astonishing degree. For example, Sage Patanjali has eight distinct steps for spiritual Sadhana. His eight-fold or Ashtanga yoga comprises of: Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. These are to be practised one after the other, and each step taking years or even one whole life to perfect for the next. Master starts from the seventh step, namely, Dhyana or meditation. The previous steps automatically come into practice. Much of labour and time is saved by this reform. Again, in the scheme of four-fold sadhana of Vedanta, he omits the first two, namely, Viveka and Vairagya, allowing them to automatically arrive on the scene and align themselves in due order as the march proceeds on under his power of Pranahuti. This doing away with the time-consuming processes makes it possible for the abhyasis of Sahaj Marga to reach the end even in a part of their present life. All that is required of them is to make a powerful will at the very start and maintain it throughout the march. A blazing sense and intensity of purpose would compensate for the late age of entry, if ever, into the path as Master has so often been pleased to write and say in person to the questioner of this possibility.

31. An outstanding personality who is our Beloved Babuji cannot be just a philosopher or a moralist. He

cannot be a reformist or a perfectionist only. Not certainly a realist or a mere humanist. Not a missionary or a Crusader of Causes, simply. Not a mystic, stoic, puritan, or a saint only. Not even just a messiah or a prophet or an Avatar. He must be all these in one and yet be more. And that more is that He is a Supreme Spiritual Figure. Otherwise he cannot make an impact on this Age as he shall. His aim is not for surface remedies or superficial reform. He is out for a radical reform, the very regeneration of mankind groping for light. I believe that his 'Ten Commandments' are a highest contribution to "Life As Such" contrasted to ordinary mundane life. He has called this work of his, original in urdu entitled: "Sahaj Marg Ke Das Asulon ki Sharah" his great master-piece. And no wonder; for, the Pattern woven by him in the commandments is fully a Life in God, by God, and for God; verily, to all those longing to be surrounded by God, to be inspired by God, indigent of God, therefore capable of God, filled with God, and ultimately delivered to God. Indeed, when our life is rescued from all the distractions and negativities and becomes positively directed to the Goal as said in the third commandment, all the conflicts and contradictions of it are reconciled; Knowledge, love and action are harmonised, pleasure and pain become one in beauty; enjoyment and renunciation equal in goodness; the breach between the finite and the infinite fills with love and overflows; and every moment carries its message of the Eternal. Thus do we attain to the wholeness of our Being, for, as long as we hug to the partness of it, which is our work-a-day existence in the environmental world, it must continue to remain a torment and be just a drab life of desire-provoking habits and traits.

32. In the sense said in the foregoing, the Commandments of our Babuji are far more covering of life and invaluable to mankind than the other ten well-known

Commandments of prophet Moses revealed from the mount of Sinai. A detailed comparison of the two would ask for a separate treatment. But even a cursory look at the both shall not fail to reveal how ours are a complete fabric beginning with the rise of day and ending with bed-time with activity betwixt wholly positive and God-centred whereas the judaistic commandments are but a list of do's and dont's, an ordinary ethics mostly incorporated in the penal laws of every country and treated as cognisable crimes punishable by Law established.

33. Now, blazing a top-most goal to the Aspiring World, as in the third Commandment just cited, our master has enriched it the fuller with his compassion of a cosmic dimension. His largeheartedness is in evidence wherever he is. He has kept the doors of his Mission, open to all irrespective of caste, creed, community or denomination. No preference is allowed for status, learning, name or wealth or fame. Sex is also not a criterion. All are lovingly called and freely chosen. One has only to choose oneself! The only condition, if so can be called, is that one should have a spiritual longing, a hungering for God, a restlessness to have Him here and now. His Mission indeed is a happy family each abhyasi bearing a natural love to him as child bears to the parents. It is a family, if you like, with a small but containing 'f' for freeness, forgiveness and filiality, and a capital 'F' for fraternity, Universal understanding, and an all-including brotherhood. He wears no personal charisma except of the saintly mein natural to his attainment. A perfect host on the house-holder plane he is solicitous of his least little guest.

34. Sri Babuji's thesis on the Guru-sishya relationship is an all-time record of compassion and love, service and solicitude, promise and performance, sympathy and understanding. It is a rare exercise, besides, of sincerity, truth

and forthrightness. It is a faithful record of matters as they truly are. If he has done some plain-speaking and called a spade – a spade, he has only done justice to things and situations as every one knows do largely exist. It is indeed a much needed warning to the aspirants for God who must be saved from the willows of the wisp. It must indeed be considered as a positive service to all the sincere students of spirituality. If what he has said catches the orthodox gurus on the wrong foot it is definitely not his fault. For him Guru is not one who seeks for endless items of service from the shishya and counts on the contributions in coin and kind. He is not for the doubtful efficacy of a mantra uttered in the ear of shishya in a scene of utter secrecy for a substantial and even life-long consideration. He says that the true Guru is one who is not only a fully realized soul himself but also loves the disciple more than the mother would love her child and who is on the constant watch for the spiritual advancement of his ward, removing the obstacles and obstructions at each step, and giving higher approaches until the ultimate has at last been reached. He personifies in himself all that he has said, nay, more. A good part of his year-round guests are his own disciples whom he duly lodges and boards. Certainly they are always, and without exception, tended spiritually. During the Basant Utsav, Birth Anniversary of the Grand Master, when nearly a thousand disciples gather to his roof from the four corners of the country, he sees to it that one and all of them are properly cared for in the rigours of a Northern Winter. All their creature comforts are adequately looked to and catered to complete satisfaction. It is indeed a sight to see how, during the said Utsav, men and women of many minds and many ways, fraternise freely, move about as but members of one family, each doing the bit he can, and so handling the huge volume of work which

must arise necessarily in a congregation of such dimensions and for a spiritual ministry, the very immensity and loftiness of which must entail proceedings not normally incidental even to gatherings of greater numbers with their own assured resources and organisational excellences.

35. Government are hard put to convene high-power committees and discuss ways and means of bringing together various peoples without causing friction. But hardly is the ink dry on such decisions, when dissensions and rents show up, here and there and disturbances rock the society robbing it of its peace. All because there is no unifying principle to weld them, into a whole. Here, with our Babuji, it is a perfect case of 'Unity in Diversity' exemplified at the Utsav before one's own eye. That Unifying Principle is God himself. Work flows automatically, and in such harmony at Basanth, so many involved and yet things moving with such clock-like precision, that it would all seem a marvel of emotional integration.

36. Indeed, so solicitous of the guest is Babuji, that each one feels that he has been looked after in a special sense, nay, that all attention has solely been reserved for him only. We, from the South, have a rare fortune of being his particular care. And we take our hats off to the North who strengthen our Babuji's hands in this patronage. The South Indian has a favoured place in the Basant Satsanghs. He has additional dish of curd in the menu. He is warmed with winter coverings added to the electrical heaters he specially installs for the occasion. He has hot water for bath and Coffee for the morning and evening repasts. And this Sage of Sages, this conveyor of the Highest Divine Grace, this Special Personality, whose word is acted to the letter and whose writ runs on every item of the mammoth arrangements for the Basanth, takes food at the last, after every one - guest, kith, friend, and servant,

may, his dog and cow and his cattle - after man and beast have had their fill! He lives every word he has said of the true guru of whom he esteems thus: "It is due to the affectionate attachment of the Guru with his disciple that the attention of the great Father, with whom his spiritual mother is so closely connected, is directed towards him. A mother's affection is well known but people know but a little of the Guru's affection and still less of God's affection. The functions of a mother and of a true Guru are closely similar. The mother retains a child within her womb for a certain duration. The Guru, too, retains the spiritual child within his mental sphere for a certain duration. During this period the disciple, like the baby in the womb, sucks his energy and gets nourishment from the spiritual waves of the Guru's thoughts. When the time matures he is born in the brighter world and thence his own spiritual life begins. If the disciple enters the mental sphere of the guru, surrendering all his belongings to him, it takes only seven months to deliver him into the brighter world". Only seven months under a right auspices and proper co-operation from the disciple! Have we heard the like of it any where? The Benevolent One, the Beloved Babuji, our Divine Master! May he live for ever and ever so that humanity everywhere may be raised to his kingdom of God.

37. One learns of an important lesson at this occasion stated, namely the lesson of 'love', 'listen' and 'live'. We love the master and both at the Utsav and on other occasions are fondly clustered round him. So eager are we to hear and benefit from his pregnant words that we listen to him attentively. We live in divine thought all the days spent under his roof. When we leave him we naturally carry him in our hearts and continue to live in him. Yes,

Love, listen and live - Love the master, listen to his counsel and live in him; a beautiful spiritual lesson which is also a perfect unison in thought, word and deed - making towards a divine, integrated and harmonious life.

38. Master's conception of the ultimate has not ever been surpassed. It is both original and extra-ordinary. According to him, the final point of approach is where every kind of power, force, activity or even stimulus disappear and man enters a state of complete negation, Nothingness or Zero. The ultimate is neither sakar nor nirakar, sagun or Nirgun, Iswhar, Avatar, Prabhu or Vibhu. He does not agree with the dogmatic, doctrinaire, formal and conceptual views or descriptions or definitions of God Almighty. For him, to define God in any terms or sense is to limit him, bind him, and defile him. It is not to him whether God is a resurgent, insurgent, subsurgent, divergent or an emergent God with or without Form and Attribute. He says that God has to be experienced as He is - Jo hai so hai - and not as picturised or projected in the imagination or the imagery of man. He maps the march to Freedom or the ultimate as a course of twenty three rings; five representing the stages of Maya, eleven as stages of egoism and seven as rings of splendour. This is an absolutely original thesis on the subject. The Yatra or spiritual journey would begin with the "Heart" region. It proceeds through the "Mind" region. It enters the "Central region" which is the reality of realities throw open by his Yoga. After the Central region is situated the actual centre, nearness to which is the very finale of human quest.

39. A striking departure from the traditional standpoint is the helpful and scientific view taken by the master regarding the six fatal foes to spiritual advancement, namely, the ari shad - vargas; Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and

Matsarya. Similarly, of the dreadful postures of Aham, Maya and Mind. Speaking of the last two, Master has said: "As a matter of fact, the mind and the maya are the only two things upon which the entire working of the Nature's machinery rests but which are so grossly misrepresented by the neophytes. They do not know that these are the two main factors which enable us to secure approach upto the Divine. Actually, the existence has for its one end, the Mind, and for the other the Maya. Both linked together, serve for a barge for our journey to the shore of the ocean of Reality". What a refreshing and reassuring treatment to the terrible posture attributed to the two very instruments of Realisation causing no end of pessimism to the practicant! He has also said that Kama and Krodha come from God. Under his power and auspices, all the enemies and obstacles to spiritual progress are rendered innocuous and there is no need to worry overmuch on their account.

40. But this does not mean in the least that one can nurse the enemies to progress and take leave of virtuous conduct. Master has sounded a stern note of warning in this regard. Says he in an article to Sahaj Marga Patrika entitled: "Towards Divinity": Virtuous conduct is quite essential for spirituality. Virtuous conduct does not mean that we should only mould our external life so as to rouse sympathy and love in others, but it is a wide term which includes all our actions. Virtuous conduct means that our life should be one with Nature, which is always peaceful and maintains equilibrium. Our revered Guruji (meaning the Grand Master) used to say: "Even if a sadhak who has reached the highest plane has some defects in his character I will say that he has not even had a glimpse of spirituality".

41. Towards the last of our Babuji's gifts to humanity I may make a mention of the state of final attainment.

Nirvana and Nirvikalpa Samadhi are not thought by him as the wonders they are made out to be. To a question on the subject Master has said: "You asked me about Nirvikalpa Samadhi. It is of course a yogic attainment, but it will not solve your problem. It can bring you to a state of salvation but liberation is something else as given in the Reality at Dawn. Suppose you attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi even then Kalpa remains in some form or the other. Besides, the state of inertness acquired cannot continue constantly as we have to attend to our duties too. But suppose we do not mind them. Even then, the preservation of the body still remains, and it is indispensable too for the attainment of perfection. If the same condition prevails certainly we cannot evidently be mindful of it. The real state of samadhi is that in which we remain attached with reality - Pure and simple - every moment no matter we may be busy all the time with our worldly work and duties. Its merits cannot be described in words but can be realized by one who abides in it. It is known as sahaj Samadhi. It is not so easy as its name denotes. It was highly spoken of by Saint Kabir and it is the thing worth gaining".

42. More than the statistical appetite for the estimate of the personality who means so much to the worthy aspirant, is the spiritual appetite which craves for more and more regarding his Benediction to mankind. A humble attempt has been made to satisfy both the statistical and the spiritual hungers in so far as the space of an article should permit. One has only to drink deep at the Fount of the Master to get a fuller appreciation. Words cannot really satisfy but at his Saptati I would wonder and I wander in this mood of wonder whether after all there remains a distinction within one between Master - Means, Man and Ultimate. It seems to be one-in-four a rare feat of spiritual alchemy.

43. We salute this Age of Space with its wonders in science. Equally remarkable, and so in keeping with the spirit of times, are the strides in spirituality made by Sri Babuji. This Age has to satisfy both the desiderata - the gains of Science and the glories of culture. In marking the goal at the highest reach possible to human endeavour; in the innovation of causing the ujjivana or upward movement in man through yogic transmission or pranahuti; in ridding the path of all superfluities; in brushing away the overgrowths of custom and tradition; in inducting the scientific expedients of ease, speed, freedom and certainty; in duly calming down the overstrung human systems caused by the tensions of a competitive life; in obviating unsettlements of whatsoever a nature and in keeping life functions and occupations at the normal pitch while at the same time leading on the aspirants to the ultimate goal of human life, our Babuji shakes hands with science to go ahead of it too, farther and very much farther, making the ultimate Jump possible, while science is yet tarrying to bridge the gulf between itself and Reality wondering if that leap should be possible at all in this Age!

44. To those rapt with the wonders of soviet science, may I present a world-rattling event occurred on the very eve of the fiftieth Anniversary of the Bolshevic Revolution, namely, the flaunting flight of Svetlana Stalina, from fear to freedom leaving behind her two children on whom she has repeatedly said she dotes and dotes? One should ask himself why the only surviving daughter of the great Dictator, Joseph Stalin, who held rein over a nation of some two hundred million people for well over a quarter of century, and whose glory is being rennovated after a brief black-out during the Kruschev Era, escape to the United States of America? Not certainly to prove herself to be a good New Yorker! It must be, in my opinion, for a

release from the disintegration of human spirit, which was Stalin's greatest feat and folly; it must be to satisfy the hunger for a larger life which can be lived more in happiness than in fear; for a security more than of saving the body, for an illumination and warmth of heart which was lacking in her home state; for the thrill of discovery if you like; but be it for better knowledge and certainty; for a passionate effort to come to terms and strike harmony between oneself and God, and together, with the exacting environs of a complex and demanding World.

45. Indeed the cry of people everywhere and always, of all races, ages and climes, of nations developing, developed, under developed and undeveloped; the cry is for a lasting happiness and conquest of pain. But this is an uninformed cry and can only be taken as a dominant strain in our general hunger for permanence and perfection, for a state of being that is immune to time's ravages, a knowledge that is basic and gives us the key to the world - mystery, for a Bliss that shall not fade. The cry had however led one time to pioneering efforts for the 'Philosopher's stone' and the 'Elixir of Life'. We know too well the fate of these futile attempts at physical immortality and endless riches to bolster it up. Life has never been one long stretch of lush green. It is made of both the rough and the smooth to be taken together. The adjustment to the seeming incompatibles can come only out of an inner richness such as Sri Babuji ensures by his power of Yogic transmission, which he would prefer to call a 'forceless force'. The transformation he makes through the Pranahuti has the rare quality of causing acceptance of what happens to us in the course of daily living, a high matter of Divine Grace and not either a disappointment to bemoan over or as a fatalistic acquiescence. On a similar note, but not as a mere matter of etiquette, we refrain from saying anything uncharitable

and in behaving calmly and with quiet cheerfulness where external circumstances or the state of our bodies predisposes us to anxiety, gloom or excessive elation. Here, in this rehabilitation of values and integration of interests; in the harmonisation of actions between the hand, head and the heart; here lies the supreme role of the master, whose Saptati we are celebrating on the 6th May, 1969, who meets on terms apt to this age, the innate and inborn longing of mankind to be their own uninhibited selves and so gaining a new strength in this Tension - torn Twentieth Century.

ERRATA

<u>PAGE.</u>	<u>LINE</u>	<u>FOR</u>	<u>READ</u>
1	15	word	words
2	17	for	far
6	8 .	screeming	screaming
6	13	war	wan
6	17	their	there
7	21	conalimination	consummation
9	15	excompassing	encompassing
9	31	he	be
11	3	pitied	pitted
12	17	are	or
15	9	sactarian	sectarian
15	26	renowned	renowned
19	23	be	he
26	22	riches	researches

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attempt has yet to come. The perennial is ever fresh. Poetry has scarce chanted its first song. Art is yet to make its maiden attempt. Man is born with no memory of his past achievements and he has to learn afresh from the alphabet all over. The perpetual admonition of Nature is that the World is new, untried. Accept it and try to understand it anew. Here, I give you, the Universe, a Virgin today".

4. Such being the master's versatility it is not easy to encompass any account of his contributions to self culture in the short space of an article. Some features only can be outlined. Even these should show an amazing "newness" in his approach to the postures of the perennial

5. For instance, Sri Babuji would baffle the world of traditionalists when he says that God is simple and can be realised by equally simple means. The learned and the refined may indeed find the idea for too naive to be taken seriously. Yet we know that the eager student of higher life would hug this idea to his heart, with tears of gratitude to bewet his wonder, fond as the very inspiration he has long been in waiting and wanting for. Has not also the Scientist said: "Simplicity is the seal of Truth"? wherefore the cussedness, then, which the erudite find in a simplicity? Is it that they specialise in smelling a rat everywhere or wherever they find their position, untenable, inconvenient and unacceptable?

6. Nevertheless, the abhyasis of Sahaj Marga know only too well that what all has been asked from them are two effortless meditations a day, morning and evening, and a short prayer at bed time. And they also know what is being conferred on them in return is an ineffable condition beggaring for words; too super-fine indeed for expression